



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
NATIONAL FOREIGN ASSESSMENT CENTER

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MEMORANDUM

SWEDEN: RESULTS OF THE NUCLEAR REFERENDUM

Swedish voters accepted expansion of nuclear power from the present 6 to as many as 12 reactors by a wide margin: 58 percent in favor to 39 percent against. As a result the moratorium on operation of two completed reactors has been removed. They may be in commercial operation early next year. Others could come on line in fall 1981, fall 1982, summer 1985 and spring 1986. These, however, may be delayed as the government wrestles with safety and waste disposal questions which must be resolved before licensing. In addition, there may be new safety questions raised about currently operating reactors. The 2 Barsback reactors, because of their densely populated locale, may be the first targets of nuclear power opponents.

Some reduction or delays in the program may be economically acceptable--a surplus of electric generating capacity is expected to develop in the near term. The referendum result has buoyed confidence in the Swedish industrial community, and permitted the government to move ahead with economic programs.

One goal of the referendum--removal of nuclear power as a political issue--has not been achieved. The opposition Social Democrats are already pressing the government to replace Energy Minister Carl Axel Petri--a nonpolitical appointee designated for the prereferendum period--with a supporter of Proposition 2. That proposition, sponsored by the Social Democrats, won a plurality of the votes. This pressure will be resisted

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by Prime Minister Falldin's anti-nuclear Center Party, which says it will abide by the referendum result but which also intends to monitor the expansion closely for safety problems. Center Party leaders will soon have an opportunity to question and delay increased nuclear power capacity--a report on enhanced safety measures is due for parliamentary debate this month. Meanwhile, former Prime Minister and Chairman of the Social Democratic Party Olaf Palme will use each such opportunities to try to drive a wedge in the coalition, which contains both pro-and anti-nuclear advocates.

Distribution: Sweden: Results of the Nuclear Referendum

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